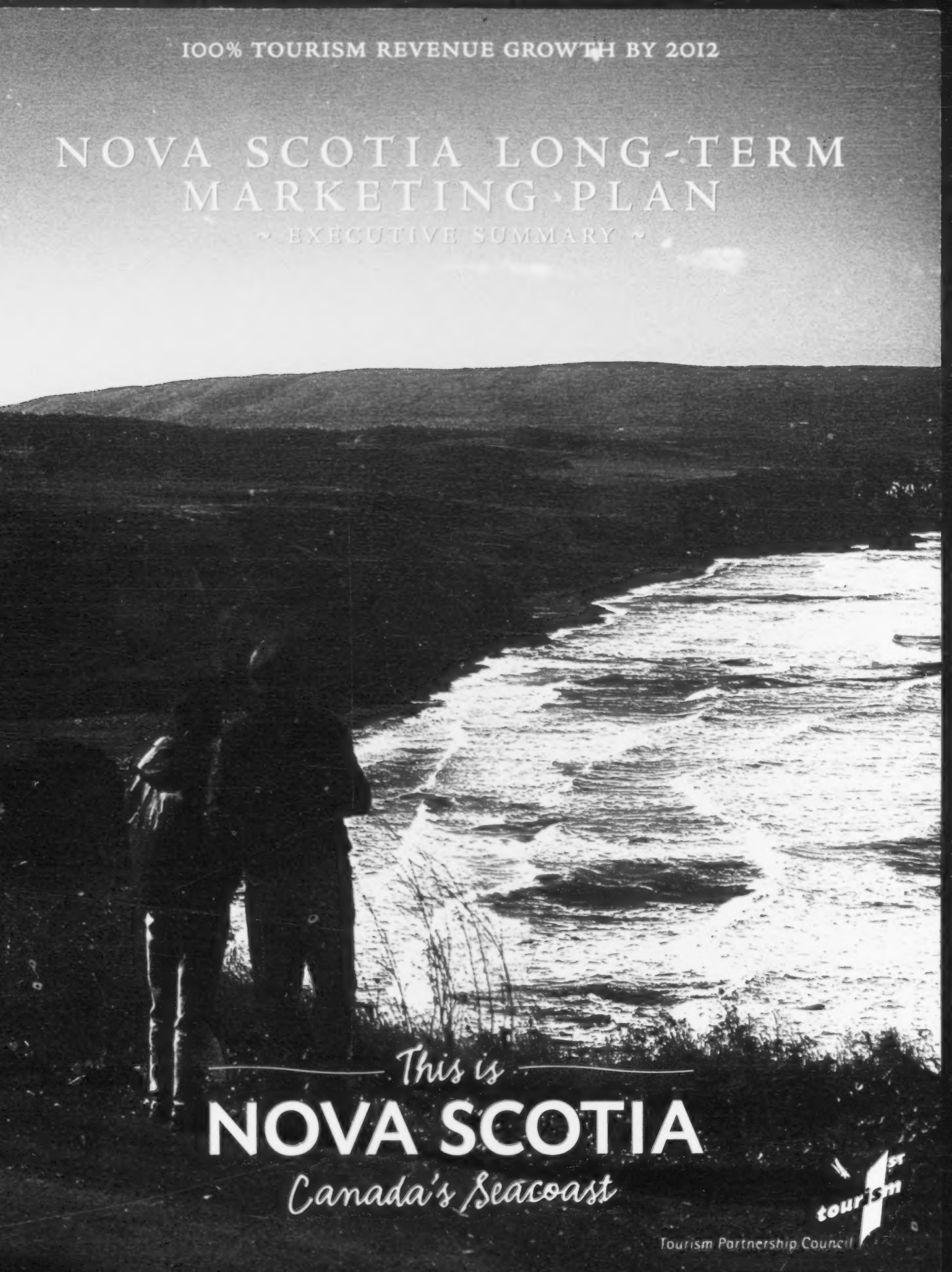
100% TOURISM REVENUE GROWTH BY 2012

NOVA SCOTIA LONG-TERM MARKETING PLAN

~ EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ~



Tourism Partnership Council

Dear Tourism Partner,

I am pleased to present you with the Executive Summary of the Long-Term Marketing Plan. This document is the result of a constructive and collaborative effort within the Marketing Committee of the Tourism Partnership Council, our industry–government partnership committed to directing tourism programming in Nova Scotia.

This Executive Summary offers a concise overview of the plan's major elements with a particular focus on our current market situation, our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats—plus an explanation of how these insights became the basis for our strategy.

Our Long-Term Marketing Plan is the culmination of insights and actions from a wide variety of sources including our E-marketing, Visitor Information Servicing and Trade strategies. The customer-centred model introduced in the 2003 Tourism Plan guided the development of this Long-Term Plan.

This plan will serve a double role in the years to come. It will direct our Provincial marketing programming for the next 3 to 5 years—and, perhaps most important of all, provide opportunities for industry members like you and me to get involved. The detailed Long-Term Marketing Plan is available on the Nova Scotia Tourism Partnership Council website at **www.nstpc.com**.

Consider this an invitation to come together as a community to work together, generating ideas and initiatives to enhance Nova Scotia as a world-class travel destination.

Sincerely,

Scott MacAulay
Chair, Tourism Partnership Council

A BOLD VISION FOR THE FUTURE

NOVA SCOTIA
Tourism Partnership

Tourism in Nova Scotia is a billion-dollar industry creating over 33,000 jobs with far-reaching economic spinoffs. It is also an industry with huge untapped potential. Now is the time for everyone in our sector—from tourism entrepreneurs to public policy makers—to come together as partners to grow our industry to even greater heights.

In 2002, we defined an ambitious Vision for tourism of "100% tourism revenue growth by 2012." Reaching $2.6 billion is a bold goal. It is achievable given the right strategic approach—and a high level of cooperation amongst industry members. The power of partnerships cannot be overstated as we approach this next exciting phase of our development.

Our plan for growth includes eleven key recommendations that will require industry collaboration and support to achieve. Four of those recommendations are primarily focused on marketing.

The marketing-focused Vision recommendations are as follows:

- Enhance the use of E-marketing to reach potential and current visitors
- Accelerate the use of performance-based marketing to improve results
- Reshape the research agenda to grow tourism revenues
- Enhance and effectively communicate Nova Scotia's brand

The work to fulfill our goal is well underway. In fact, our Long-Term Marketing Plan builds upon work that has already been accomplished—and provides further direction on how to accomplish the marketing Vision recommendations.

WHAT'S IN THE PLAN?

This Executive Summary will provide you with an overview of the components that make up the Long-Term Marketing Plan. The detailed plan is available on the Tourism Partnership Council (TPC) website: www.nstpc.com.

The plan provides a broad strategy along with the guiding principles for marketing Nova Scotia as a travel destination. This plan is the product of the Marketing Committee of the Tourism Partnership Council, a public-private sector partnership that works together to direct tourism programming for Nova Scotia.

The plan has four main overriding objectives and nine key strategies encompassing a range of marketing concepts—from building a sales culture to research and partnerships. The plan provides an overview of the geographic and specialized markets in which Nova Scotia competes and explains our overall marketing approach.

WHERE WE ARE TODAY - THE PLAN'S STARTING POINT

For the past decade, tourism has emerged as one of the world's fastest-growing industries. However, from a national perspective, Canada's tourism industry shows slow but steady revenue increases over the long term, but rapid growth appears to be stalled.

At the provincial level, Nova Scotia has great potential as a travel destination. With the exception of 2003, our province's tourism revenues have trended upward. The tourism industry continues to be an important part of the Nova Scotian economy, generating over $1 billion in revenues annually and employing over 33,000 people.

TAKING STOCK THROUGH SWOT

So many of the strategic steps we take to build our tourism industry are guided by the results of a SWOT analysis. SWOT breaks down what we know about the operating environment into four main categories: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

The SWOT analysis is a useful tool for facilitating a thorough and objective assessment of our situation. Equal attention is given to areas where we excel as a destination or where we need to improve. The analysis also covers a lot of strategic ground that may be beyond our control, including the favourability of the economy and other global issues facing the industry.

A SWOT snapshot of Nova Scotia's tourism industry

Strengths – Nova Scotia's key strengths are seacoast scenery combined with rich history, culture and outdoor experiences. Emerging strengths include meetings and conventions, golf and the cruise sector.

Weaknesses – Lack of transportation access from major population centres is considered a weakness. As well, Nova Scotia's seasonality is limited with few off-season activities and a finite capacity during the high season.

Opportunities – An analysis of key target markets reveals substantial unrealized potential outside the region. Significant growth in the use of the Internet for travel planning presents an opportunity to increase our reach and engage those potential visitors.

Threats – These include global pressures on the tourism industry, such as security and safety as well as rising fuel prices. Fluctuating exchange rates and high insurance costs create uncertainty. Increases in marketing spending by competitors also presents a threat as their brand awareness may become stronger in key target markets.

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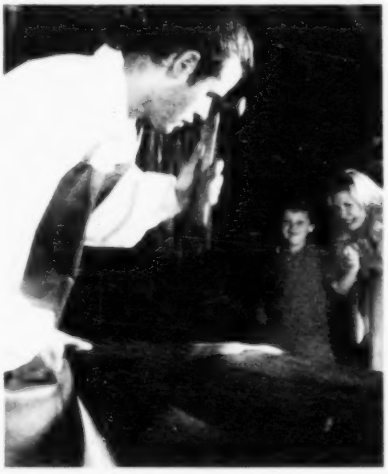
The conclusions from the SWOT analysis are:

- Nova Scotia must build brand awareness in untapped markets outside the region, because top-of-mind awareness is directly linked to market share. Incremental investment in raising brand awareness will create a bigger return.
- We not only have to increase visitation but also use in-province marketing to increase spending per visitor.
- Research reveals that experiences and packages are increasingly important to the touring market during all seasons. Package development will increase revenues, as it makes it easier for potential visitors to plan and purchase their Nova Scotia vacation.
- The use of the Internet for travel planning is rapidly increasing. Nova Scotia must harness the full potential of the Internet.
- Transportation access is a significant barrier to travel from key markets. Nova Scotia must expand travel partnerships/packaging to overcome this weakness.



REALIZE THE VISION – OUR MARKETING OBJECTIVES

The SWOT analysis gives us an indication of where the best market opportunities lie for Nova Scotia and how to pursue them. In order to realize these opportunities, we need clearly defined goals and objectives. Specific marketing objectives are set annually in the TPC's Annual Tourism Plan. In general, our overall marketing objective support the Tourism Vision goal of doubling revenues by:

1. Maximizing marketing-generated revenues;
2. Increasing visitation;
3. Increasing yield from visitors (length of stay and spending); and,
4. Strengthening our shoulder seasons.

HOW WE'LL GET THERE – OUR LONG-TERM MARKETING STRATEGY

Our business target is to double tourism revenues; one road that will help guide us there is our Long-Term Marketing Strategy. It serves as a foundation for how we will market Nova Scotia as a travel destination. The strategy focuses on:

- Target Markets and how we will approach them;
- Our Customer-Focused approach, first introduced in the 2003 Tourism Plan; and
- Nine Key Marketing Strategies that will guide our efforts.

Target Markets

The Long-Term Marketing Strategy is based on a balance of *specialized* and *targeted mass* marketing. Most spending will be focused on the experiential touring market, which combines the greatest number of customers with the widest array of travel motivations and interests. This will be complemented with efforts in specialized markets that offer the greatest potential return.

Finite resources demand that we carefully select target markets. We describe our largest market segment, "experiential touring", in terms of geographic areas. We also target a number of "specialized" markets that are described by criteria other than geography.

Experiential touring markets:
Atlantic Canada
Quebec
Ontario
Northeast US
Europe

Specialized markets:
Meetings and conventions
Cruise
Group touring

The Customer Comes First.

Whether you're involved in a private tourism operation or public policy, *everyone* in our industry has one thing in common—the customer. Customers are the focus of all our programming and planning. Their needs influence everything we do, from how we build awareness through to how we deliver the experience to the visitor.

Our approach is best explained by guiding you briefly through what we call the "customer-centred model." It shapes our programming so that every phase of our interaction with potential customers is designed to encourage visitation and repeat business.

Here's how the customer-centred approach works:

As we create awareness through programming, we're looking at a potential customer—someone who may be considering a vacation but is not specifically thinking of Nova Scotia.

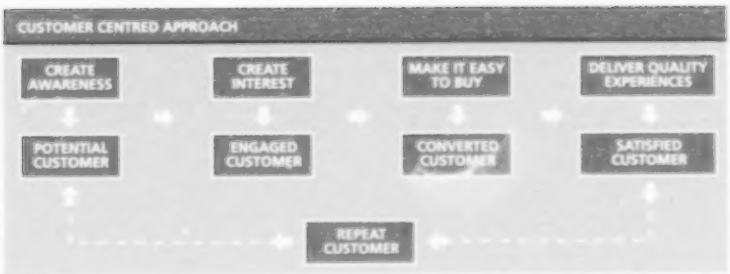
As they become actively interested and involved in the search for a vacation destination—reading ads, compiling information—they become an engaged customer.

When the decision has been made to visit Nova Scotia, that person becomes a converted customer.

And, if we've all done our job properly and that person continues to make purchasing decisions while they are here, then we have a satisfied customer.

Once we've done everything right, the chances are greater to turn that satisfied customer into a repeat customer.

Customer-Centred Model



Nine Key Marketing Strategies

After analyzing the SWOT we developed nine key marketing strategies. Each strategy was evaluated relative to its importance to the Vision's success and on its potential for actual implementation. Following are the nine key strategic priorities:

1. Managing and communicating the brand
2. Performance-based marketing
3. Building a sales culture
4. Effective marketing through the travel trade
5. Optimizing E-marketing
6. Visitor information servicing
7. Building effective partnerships
8. Leveraging mediated communications
9. Providing useful insights through research

These strategic priorities form the foundation of how we will market Nova Scotia as a travel destination over the next three to five years. Each one of these strategies is detailed in the following pages.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #1: MANAGING AND COMMUNICATING THE BRAND

QUALITY AND CONSISTENCY—THE KEYS TO SUCCESS

Nova Scotia's Brand

Our brand is our most important asset because it defines the perception that exists of us in the mind of a potential visitor. A brand is a promise or idea that is conveyed both through communication and through the customers' actual experiences. Branding is more than marketing; it is also what we do through product development and partnerships to influence how our brand is perceived.

Our brand positioning statement is the *unique point of difference* we are trying to create in the customers' minds:

"To people who appreciate the sea,
Nova Scotia is Canada's foremost seacoast vacation destination
that offers an authentic experience for your body and soul
better than any other destination
because only Nova Scotia uniquely combines spectacular scenery,
living tradition, maritime culture and lifestyle
with a feeling of deep-down spiritual satisfaction."

The brand positioning statement answers the following questions: Who are our customers? How do we want them to perceive us? And lastly, what unique attributes can support that perception? Answering these questions provides a clear picture of our marketing focus. Everything we do will support this positioning.

Clear communication is the key

Managing and clearly communicating the brand will be critical to our success. That is why it is one of the eleven Vision recommendations and a key strategy in this plan.

Effective brand management demands that we regularly measure consumer perception to assess the overall health of our brand attributes. These attributes are the aspects of the brand we want potential visitors to associate with Nova Scotia, such as our spectacular scenery, living history, and seacoast. These attributes differentiate us in the minds of consumers and lead to their decision to visit. We track these attributes on an ongoing basis.

The Nova Scotia brand is managed and communicated through the following actions:

- Continuously monitoring and validating brand attributes and positioning by conducting consumer research and by evolving the brand based on that research;
- Developing brand communication mandatories that ensure brand consistency and reinforce quality. With these mandatories in place, we will have a consistent brand image whether it is in our literature, Visitor Information Centres (VIC) or in our partnership advertising;
- Managing brand extensions. Brand extensions can help build customer awareness of specific services or product areas within the overall Nova Scotia "umbrella" brand. Sometimes these are delivered by a partner organization. These relationships need to be managed so that they are consistent with and supportive of our brand positioning. Examples include: *Taste of Nova Scotia, Check In* and *Bay of Fundy Recommended Experience*.
- Capitalizing on synergies with the Brand Nova Scotia initiative.

How can I be involved?

All stakeholders have a role in living and building the Nova Scotia brand. Tourism is a fragmented industry consisting of many suppliers and buyers. There is a wealth of marketing communication, thousands of small brands and many businesses interacting with visitors each day. At every stage of that interaction there is an opportunity to either support or hinder the brand.

Actively supporting the Nova Scotia Brand will help grow our visitation, repeat visitation and, ultimately, our revenues.

Nova Scotia tourism stakeholders can support the brand in many ways by:

- Developing products and experiences and marketing communication that is consistent with the brand;
- Keeping the Nova Scotia brand top-of-mind in marketing your product/region;
- Ensuring product quality;
- Offering quality service; and,
- That *added* touch of Maritime hospitality for visitors when they arrive in Nova Scotia.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #2: PERFORMANCE-BASED MARKETING

MEASURING RESULTS SO WE KNOW WHAT'S WORKING

Nova Scotia's Tourism Vision sets aggressive revenue-building objectives. With finite resources being pulled between many potential markets and tactical options, knowing how to reach the highest-yield customers is a challenge. This is where performance-based marketing comes into play. The performance-based approach simply means measuring results from marketing campaigns and applying our learnings to future plans and tactics. Tourism marketing in Nova Scotia has demonstrated a positive return on investment (ROI). As tactics and communications channels evolve, we will develop new measurements so that we can more accurately assess our results. We will also encourage our marketing partners to do the same.

The Tourism Vision's recommendation on performance-based marketing focuses on the private sector adopting performance-based marketing techniques. The Long-Term Marketing Plan supports this recommendation through the facilitation of industry training.

In order to further the use of performance-based marketing, we will:

- Continue to incorporate call-to-action in marketing initiatives through the 1-800 number, website, email or mail;
- Make additional efforts to track and measure customer response in appropriate ways, and to link these responses to programs through Business Reply Cards, 1-800 operator numbers, web metrics, etc.;
- Incorporate mandatory reporting into partnership programming where appropriate and practical;
- Report ROI on expenditures where possible; and,
- Encourage partners to adopt performance-based marketing techniques.

How can I be involved?

Every dollar you invest in marketing is critical to your success as an individual business. However if you don't know the results of your marketing efforts, how do you know if your money is being well spent? Adopting performance-based marketing techniques will help you measure your results so you can learn from successes and failures in order to make appropriate decisions in the future. Workshops will be offered so you can learn new ways to capture information – come and take part!

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #3: BUILDING A SALES CULTURE

EVERY POINT OF CONTACT IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO SELL!

Sales culture is about keeping our eye on the ball. All of our marketing programs, at every stage of the customer-centred model, are intended to lead to a sale. An effective sales culture ensures that our customers always have an easy way to find more information and make a purchase. This can mean leading them to book a trip to Nova Scotia, or convincing them to stay one more day.

Sales culture is entwined throughout the Long-Term Marketing Plan. We will achieve the highest possible yield per-visitor when a brand-consistent sales culture exists at every stage of customer contact. The following is how we will maximize sales at each point of contact with the visitor:

Creating Awareness

- Incorporate a call-to-action in all marketing communications; this will serve as the starting point to pull customers through the "path to purchase."

Creating Interest

- Provide packages and special offers through partnerships and co-operative advertising.
- Incorporate on-line retail packages to meet the growing demand.

Make it Easy to Buy

- Use E-marketing to provide relevant material on-line and make it easier for consumers to gather information by using outbound email with embedded forms.
- Streamline our call-to-action in conventional media by providing the 1-800 number and web address only.
- Develop an infrastructure that simplifies booking. Promote on-line booking on novascotia.com, expand the variety of products that can be booked through our central reservation and information service (Check-In) and promote VICs and Check-In services to visitors.
- Incorporate sales performance incentives for Visitor Information Servicing staff where practical, which will create a culture of "closing the sale."

Deliver Quality Experiences

- Deliver quality experiences when our customers are here so they will stay longer and spend more. Sales training, and product knowledge will be imperative for travel trade, VIC staff, Check-In staff and all front-line industry employees.
- Enhance the "Award of Quality Program" to ensure Visitor Information Centres meet quality service standards.
- Ensure all front-line tourism staff are trained in "SuperHost", promote participation in the Tourism Human Resource Council's (THRC) training and certification programs, and other service excellence programs.

How can I be involved?

Industry participation at every stage of the customer-centred model is imperative in building a sales culture. Partners will be key in delivering on-line retail offers and making products easy to purchase and experience for visitors.

Enhance the sales culture in your own business by ensuring staff are trained in product knowledge and sales through promoting participation in all THRC service excellence and certification programs. Additional training will maximize the visitor's experience—and your own returns!

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #4: EFFECTIVE MARKETING THROUGH THE TRAVEL TRADE
WORKING TOGETHER TO BUILD AWARENESS AND SALES

In a number of markets, a proportion of potential visitors prefer to plan and book some form of package vacation through travel agents or tour operators. The travel trade is critical for reaching consumers who choose to purchase travel experiences through this channel as it allows consumers to find out about Nova Scotia and plan their vacation more easily. This enables us to broaden our potential audience and, through partnerships, sell to customers who prefer this method of purchasing.

We will continue to build awareness of Nova Scotia and increase sales within the travel trade channel through the following activities:

- Trade shows and marketplaces;
- Sales calls, destination presentations and training;
- Provincial, regional and national promotions and events; and
- Familiarization tours.

We will continue to promote Nova Scotia through the travel trade channel with the following specific approaches:

- Creating effective, mutually beneficial partnerships with select travel trade;
- Building awareness of our tourism products with the travel trade through communication and sales activities; and
- Work with trade partners to increase demand for Nova Scotia's products through joint marketing opportunities with call-to-action partners.

How can I be involved?

There are many ways to realize sales through the travel trade channel and a good start includes learning more about this segment of the industry by attending a Trade Smart seminar. Get involved in trade shows and marketplaces to showcase your product. Hosting a familiarization tour is another method of connecting with the travel trade. Continually, look for opportunities to participate in provincial, regional and national events. And, keep the sales team informed of new or enhanced tourism products.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #5: OPTIMIZING E-MARKETING

PROFITING FROM THE INTERNET REVOLUTION

The number of travelers using the Internet for travel planning has skyrocketed. Today's travelers have added an additional step to the consumer buying process: now they go on-line for information about a destination. This has a dual effect, presenting a huge opportunity for tourism destinations while broadening the number of competitors. In order to remain competitive we must harness the full potential of the Internet to rise above competitors to reach potential visitors, develop an ongoing dialogue with them and, ultimately, close the sale.

Restructure novascotia.com

Our website, novascotia.com, is a highly versatile marketing tool. It goes beyond promoting and advertising Nova Scotia as a destination; it serves as an on-line retailer for partner packaging and as a portal for collecting visitor research. We will continue to evolve our website in an effort to enhance the user's experience. Planned updates include:

- Developing easier content acquisition for the user;
- Optimizing user-friendly site navigation;
- Incorporating imagery consistent with the brand; and,
- Delivering targeted content and personalized information.

Integrate Information Content

As we continue to evolve as a tourism destination, the content required to sell our key attributes and features must also change. This, coupled with the increased sophistication of the Internet user, requires novascotia.com to deliver targeted, accurate information in a simple and compelling fashion.

This on-line information is not just for the potential visitor gathering information but it will also assist VIC staff, central reservation staff and other front-line industry representatives who use the Internet to assist visitors.

In an effort to make our information more cohesive, we will consolidate and manage all content in a single web-based information platform. This platform will provide consistency to many different communication channels including novascotia.com, VICs, Check In and printed material.

How can I be involved?

In addition to your individual E-marketing efforts, take part in offering on-line packages on novascotia.com. On your own website, make sure to provide up-to-date content on your products and services—as well as a link to the provincial site.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #6: VISITOR INFORMATION SERVICING

HOW TO GET VISITORS TO STAY LONGER AND SPEND MORE

Marketing Nova Scotia successfully as a destination means more than just attracting visitors. It also means ensuring that visitor satisfaction—and spending—is maximized. This can be accomplished by making sure customers have the best possible access to timely and relevant information when they are planning their trip and while they are visiting Nova Scotia.

All information needs to be delivered with a high level of service excellence and in a way that is consistent with our brand. Research demonstrates that visitors who seek more information while they are here will stay longer and spend more money. This is an opportunity to generate incremental spending from each visitor—and help us reach our revenue goal.

Evolving our thinking

The Tourism Partnership Council's 2003 "Visitor Information Servicing (VIS) Strategy" expanded our ideas about visitor servicing beyond "brick and mortar" visitor centres. The VIS Strategy helped connect the dots between Visitor Information Centres (VIC) and other critical sources of information. Our broadened understanding of visitor servicing now links together a wider range of elements including:

- novascotia.com;
- Literature and collateral material production;
- Literature distribution;
- Kiosk program;
- Check In reservation and information service; and
- Visitor Information Centres.

Bringing People and Product Together

Our business is all about exceeding customers' expectations—and this includes making sure visitors can access the information and experiences that meet their needs, while doing it in a way that is consistent with the Nova Scotia brand. This means having efficient information systems that support friendly and helpful service. The following are some of the ways we will increase the level of service to visitors:

1. Leverage technology to provide a flexible, accessible tourism information platform. This includes consolidating novascotia.com and checkinnovascotia.com and using this platform for all front-line staff.
2. Deliver sales and service results by promoting a sales culture, ensuring product knowledge and training for all VIS staff (VICs, Check In).

3. Ensuring activity levels meet customer demands by effective management of the central reservation service .
4. Cross-promote Visitor Information Centres through other media channels to encourage in-person visitor counseling.
5. Distribute collateral materials efficiently to potential visitors inquiring about Nova Scotia, and to VICs and kiosks that keep visitors informed of activities while they are here.
6. Ensure superior customer service at all points of contact with visitors through quality control and visitor services programs.

How can I be involved?

Visitor servicing is definitely a team sport! While a destination marketing organization can help attract visitors, the millions of people who travel in Nova Scotia interact mostly with industry operators. Everyone has a role to play in visitor information servicing. Make sure your front-line staff know Nova Scotia's product and "things to see and do" in order to keep them in your area. Participate in product knowledge tours and the open door training program by offering your products and services to front-line visitor services employees. You can also join the Check In Information and Reservation Service.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #7: BUILDING EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

WE'RE STRONGER TOGETHER

Partnership has always been part of our business plan. In fact, Nova Scotia's tourism sector has led the way in building effective partnerships for many years. You'll see it in so many different areas of our industry—through our co-operative advertising programs and our community product development initiatives to the Tourism Partnership Council itself. The shape of our partnerships will continue to evolve as a critical part of our strategies.

By their very definition, all of our partnerships seek to combine resources to achieve greater overall results. And by resources, we mean more than just financial. Through partnerships, we can also market specific products and package offers that can help "make the sale".

Effective partnerships are based on good communication, shared goals and clear expectations regarding results. With that in mind, the TPC will soon release a new set of guidelines as a component of a broader partnership strategy.

As Nova Scotia continues to develop new and effective partnerships, we will evaluate new opportunities in light of the following principles:

- Return on Investment (ROI);
- Potential to build awareness;
- Contribution to overall Nova Scotia brand integrity;
- Product strength/development;
- Unique selling propositions; and
- Measurement and evaluation (visitation, revenue, awareness, new product).

Relating specifically to marketing partnerships, the Long-Term Marketing Plan will help us maximize the value of partnerships by:

- Setting clear partnership objectives and criteria for selecting partnership opportunities;
- Providing multiple partnership vehicles to address market needs and the appropriate stages of the customer-centred model;
- Establishing guidelines and requirements for partnership agreements; and,
- Communicating with industry regarding partnership opportunities on a regular and timely basis.

How can I be involved?

There are many opportunities for industry to work cohesively to expand our marketing reach and revenues. Take part in programs and offerings that are available to you annually in the Partnership Opportunities Book. Be proactive and find alternative ways to leverage your resources with fellow industry members. And make a point to be part of the collective industry voice through your Tourism Partnership Council and Committees.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #8: LEVERAGING MEDIATED COMMUNICATIONS

GETTING IN THE NEWS IS GOOD NEWS

Mediated communications is more than just a positive story—it is a powerful communication medium. A good review in a magazine or favourable press coverage can have a major impact on the awareness of our destination. Not only can a feature story contain more information and imagery than an advertisement but a travel writer represents an implied, unbiased third-party endorsement.

Our strategy is to ensure mediated communications continue to play a critical role in creating consumer awareness of Nova Scotia. Many opportunities exist in the media industry—through magazines, television, film and other media vehicles, which have the power to heighten Nova Scotia's overall awareness by focusing on particular product offerings such as cuisine, golf or outdoor pursuits.

Worth its weight in gold

Mediated communications requires a fairly modest investment on our part. And the return on this investment is significant! The estimated advertising value of the "free" editorial coverage Nova Scotia receives in a typical year is *several times larger than our actual advertising budget.*

The Long-Term Marketing Plan sets out a strategic approach to ensure that we make optimal use of this valuable communication channel. Our strategy for generating editorial coverage calls for a team approach, which rewards both participating operators and Nova Scotia as a destination in general.

Elements of the strategy include:

- Providing resource materials to journalists;
- Promoting Nova Scotia as an experiential destination to journalists;
- Providing journalists with greater technical and logistical support;
- Finding efficient ways (such as web-based systems) for journalists to access imagery and information;
- Using Marketing Public Relations to create awareness of Nova Scotia;
- Proactively promoting Nova Scotia to journalists through sales calls, familiarization tours—and by attending media marketplaces and working with partners on joint initiatives; and
- Finding ways to incorporate our call-to-action into media stories, by re-printing stories where appropriate, and by publicizing accolades.

How can I be involved?

Every operator can benefit from increased media coverage. Independently, you can be proactive and leverage the media for your own business. In addition, you can participate in familiarization tours for travel writers and keep our media team up-to-date with information on your products, services and area.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #9: PROVIDING USEFUL INSIGHTS THROUGH RESEARCH

INFORMATION IS POWER

It's hard to ignore the importance of research in understanding our operating environment, shaping strategies and evaluating business results. Decision makers at every level face uncertainty with less than perfect information. Ironically, what seems like the opposite problem can be equally daunting—potentially useful data can be too large or complex to decipher. The task of research is to provide decision makers with useful insights in a chaotic and complex world.

With so much we need to know, where do we start? How do we separate "mission-critical" information from the simply "nice to know" data? And finally, how do we make sure that we make the most effective use of all the information available to us?

While research is the last of the key strategies in the Long-Term Marketing Plan, it is usually the first to come into play in any given planning or programming initiative. We have a long history of conducting research, ranging from measuring overall industry activity levels and market intelligence, to accountability and evaluation research and studies on specific tourism-related issues. Now, our research strategy's focus will be to adopt a more formalized and deliberate process to ensure all tourism stakeholders are in a position to have the best information possible.

To begin, we will embrace a set of principles that will guide our research efforts:

1. Identify and prioritize research needs by:

- Determining mandatory research required as a legal obligation, i.e. funding agreements, industry statistics, major program evaluations; and,
- Identifying discretionary research to determine strategic direction, i.e. market intelligence, consumer behaviour, creative direction.

2. Enhance research sources by:

- Co-operating with partners on joint research projects;
- Developing and adopting policies that mandate reporting of results by industry and marketing partners;
- Commissioning primary research based on priorities; and,
- Using the Internet as a data-capture mechanism.

3. Enhance analysis capacity by:

- Enhancing capability to provide custom analysis on key studies such as the Canadian Travel Survey and International Travel Survey; and,
- Improving the analysis capability of web metrics.

4. Communicate results by:

- Communicating results through Facts Flash, Tourism Insights and presentations; and,
- Publishing research reports and trend information on www.nstpc.com.

How can I be involved?

You can be involved in research by learning about your customers and by keeping informed of changes and trends in our industry. This information can be accessed through publications and reports that are available on www.nstpc.com as well as through *Facts Flash* and *Tourism Insights*. You can also contribute to the industry's knowledge by sharing your own information. Legislated statistics such as accommodation reports are just one example of information that is valuable to the whole industry.

EVALUATING THE LONG-TERM MARKETING PLAN

In any strategy or plan it is important to measure results so learnings can be incorporated into future planning. The success of the Long-Term Marketing Plan will be evaluated on three levels:

1. Macro Level – results related to the overall marketing objectives of the plan
2. Program Results Level – results (outcomes) directly trackable to specific marketing programs
3. Activity Level – where results cannot be measured or attributed to specific programs, or are essentially qualitative, the activities and completion of work plan elements will be considered evidence of progress.

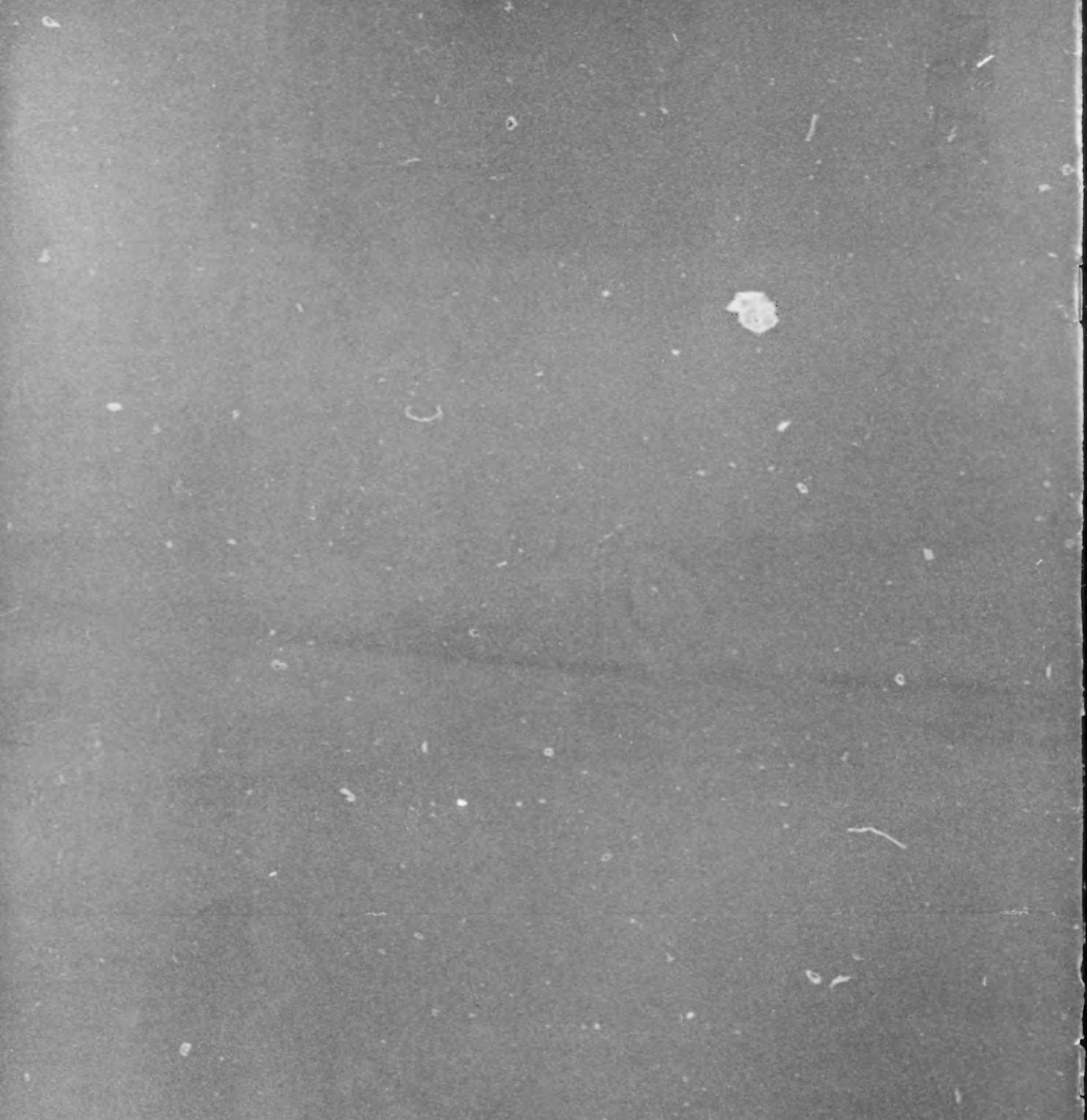
Each level of evaluation is detailed in the Long-Term Marketing Plan Appendices in the following format:

Outcome: What is the overall desired effect?
Measure: What is the unit of measure, static or criterion used to gauge success?
Data Source: How or where will the actual measurement be obtained?

REALIZING THE VISION - GET INVOLVED!

The Long-Term Marketing Plan and appendices are available on the Nova Scotia Tourism Partnership Council website at www.nstpc.com. Consider this plan a *tool* to get involved in marketing Nova Scotia. There are various programs, partnership opportunities and independent ventures you can undertake to increase your tourism revenues. Through collaboration and partnerships we can raise awareness for Nova Scotia as Canada's foremost seacoast destination.

"To people who appreciate the sea,
Nova Scotia is Canada's foremost seacoast vacation destination
that offers an authentic experience for your body and soul
better than any other destination
because only Nova Scotia uniquely combines spectacular scenery,
living tradition, maritime culture and lifestyle
with a feeling of deep-down spiritual satisfaction."



NOVA SCOTIA DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM, CULTURE & HERITAGE

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